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Kanku Dai: Step-by-Step Instructions

Opening and Salutation

- Start in *musubi-dachi* (heels together, toes out). Bow and announce "Kanku-dai."
- Move to *hachiji-dachi* (natural stance), arms outstretched in front. Right middle/index fingers rest on left middle/index fingers, right thumb on left thumbnail.
- Slowly raise hands to forehead, gaze through the triangle formed by your hands, symbolizing "viewing the sky."[1] [2] [3]

Initial Movements

- Lower arms abruptly to shoulder height, elbows high, forearms vertical.
- Turn head left, bring left foot to right, extend right arm forward, left hand under right arm. Execute *hidari chudan tate shuto-uke* (left vertical knife-hand block), right fist in *hikite* (pull-back position).[1]
- On the spot, perform *migi chudan-zuki* (right middle punch).[1]
- Pivot pelvis left, perform *migi chudan uchi-ude-uke* (right inside-out block) with right foot rotated in, right leg extended, left knee bent.[1]
- Return to hachiji-dachi, perform *hidari chudan-zuki* (left middle punch).[1]

Progression

- Continue with a series of blocks, punches, and stances, including *zenkutsu-dachi* (front stance), *kiba-dachi* (horse stance), and *uraken-uchi* (backfist strike).
- The kata includes dynamic movements: jumps, spins, and drops, with combinations of upper and lower-level techniques.[2]

Ending

- After the final kiai (spirit shout), rotate 180° to the right into wide *kiba-dachi*.
- Extend left arm under right, then circle both arms wide as you straighten up and bring left foot to right in *hachiji-dachi*.
- Raise arms overhead, cross them in front, then return to *musubi-dachi* and bow to finish.[1] [2]

Note: Kanku Dai is a long kata with 65 movements, combining techniques from Heian and Tekki kata, and is considered a fundamental advanced kata in Shotokan Karate.[2] [4]

Kanku Sho: Step-by-Step Instructions

Opening and Salutation

- Begin in *musubi-dachi*. Bow and announce "Kanku-sho."
- Move to *hachiji-dachi*, fists closed in front of hips.[5]

Initial Movements

- Turn head left, shift left foot into *kokutsu-dachi* (back stance), perform *hidari chudan morote-uke* (left reinforced inside-out block).[5]
- Turn head right, shift right foot into *kokutsu-dachi*, perform *migi chudan morote-uke* (right reinforced inside-out block).[5]
- Turn head left, bring right foot to left, rotate 90° left, settle into *kokutsu-dachi*, perform *hidari chudan morote-uke* forward.[5]

Progression

- Step forward with right foot into *zenkutsu-dachi*, perform *migi chudan oï-zuki* (right lunge punch).[5]
- In place, perform *hineri-kaeshi* (forearm twist back, elbow bent at 90°).[5]
- Step forward with left foot into *zenkutsu-dachi*, perform *hidari chudan oï-zuki* (left lunge punch), then *hineri-kaeshi*.[5]
- Step forward with right foot into *zenkutsu-dachi*, perform *migi chudan oï-zuki* (right lunge punch). Kiai![5]

Signature Sequences

- Turn 180° left into *moto-dachi*, right hand open in front, left hand on right wrist, perform *soete kake-dori* (reinforced wrist grab).[5] [6]
- The kata includes advanced techniques: spinning jumps (*kaiten-tobi*), jumping spinning crescent kick (*mikazuki-tobi-geri*), and dynamic body shifting.[7] [6]

Ending

- After the final kiai, finish with a sequence of blocks and grabs, returning to *musubi-dachi* and bowing.[5]

Note: Kanku Sho is shorter (48 movements) but more acrobatic and advanced than Kanku Dai, with a focus on mid-level blocks and rapid transitions. It is popular in black belt competition for its athleticism and aesthetic appeal.[7] [8]

Summary Table: Kanku Dai vs. Kanku Sho

Feature	Kanku Dai	Kanku Sho
Length	65 movements	48 movements
Emphasis	Larger, more expansive techniques	Smaller, more athletic techniques

Feature	Kanku Dai	Kanku Sho
Key Features	Jumps, drops, spins, Heian/Tekki links	Spinning jump, crescent kick, wrist grabs
Difficulty	Advanced	More advanced, highly athletic
Opening	Look through triangle hands	Series of reinforced blocks

For full step-by-step visual instruction, refer to reputable video tutorials or seek guidance from a qualified instructor.[9] [10] [6]

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1. http://kata.blackbelt.ie/kanku-dai-2/
2. https://www.themartialway.com.au/kanku-dai/
3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djynOZXeXNU
4. https://blackbeltwiki.com/kanku-dai
5. http://kata.blackbelt.ie/kanku-sho-instructional/
6. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veaayoYQ9D4
7. https://controlconceptscanada.ca/kanku-sho/
8. https://www.themartialway.com.au/kanku-sho/
9. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Hgi2vi9EbA
10. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsYEZjQqr4A